

poprocked2



DAVID SORCHER | CIN WEEKLY

Pat Jones and Keith Neltner are two of the regional artists whose poster art is in the show *Pop Rocked 2* at the Powerhouse Factory's Jim Amann Gallery in Covington.

RODNEY WILSON | CIN WEEKLY CONTRIBUTOR

Of the five senses, seeing and hearing seem to be preferred by the arts. Perhaps it's because visuals and sound can be simultaneously shared with large groups of people the way that the other senses are not. It's no surprise that sounds are often used to enhance visuals, as when we experience the sweeping orchestral strains of a romantic movie's score.

It's less frequent that sight lends support to sound. One of a few exceptions to this is the concert poster, a growing tradition that seeks to interpret and bolster musical performances through original art. *Pop Rocked 2: A Gig Poster Explosion*, a new show opening at Covington's Powerhouse Factory, Inc., celebrates the visually musical with a collection of

rock posters produced by some of the Midwest's finest creators.

SEE THE POSTERS, BUY THE POSTERS

Powerhouse is a design company run by a collective of multi-disciplined artists and designers in Covington's burgeoning Pike Street arts district. While income is generated by such far-flung projects as Web sites and package design, the group's reputation has been built through an obvious passion for and dedication to handmade poster art. Powerhouse's poster art commitment attracted the show's presenter, The American Poster Institute, organizers of the multi-national Flatstock conventions.

Pop Rocked 2 will find Powerhouse's Jim Amann gallery filled with regional artists displaying original poster work and other music-themed art-work. The show's opening will

kick things off with a reception and Flatstock-styled poster sale where all displayed artwork (and more) will be available for purchase from artists at individual booths.

The *Pop Rocked 2* show features names from the Midwest's growing poster art scene, including Dayton's FNHarsh Design, Lexington's Cricket Press and Northern Kentucky's Neltner Creative.

FROM DARKER SIDE TO LIGHTER SIDE

"We'll have darker themed, kind of country-tinged kind of work," says Keith Neltner of Neltner Creative, a local design company that's worked with performers such as Hank Williams III and the Kentucky Struts. While Neltner employs dark imagery and startlingly evocative colors, his lighter side will also be represented at the show with Small Print

Powerhouse Factories showcases regionally created rock art posters

Press, a collaboration between himself and local artist (and *CiN* creative artist) Rob Warnick that has produced artwork for such acts as Cake and Modest Mouse.

Having two outlets that focus on music-themed imagery has made Neltner a fixture of Cincinnati's underground arts scene, and he's given much thought to the nature of poster art and the ideas behind shows like *Pop Rocked 2*.

"With the computer being so prevalent and anyone feeling like they can design, the idea of doing silk-screen prints kind of brings a fine art quality," he says. "It becomes more handmade, which I think people are going back to. You know, the Internet is so quick and instantaneous, it's kind of cool to have something that's one of a kind and handmade."

NO MUSICAL TALENT NEEDED

Neltner points to both attainability and a well-established music collector culture as reasons for the poster art revival that *Pop Rocked 2* celebrates. "There's more prevalence with poster art," he says. "Instead of collecting vinyl, you're collecting poster art, something that's associated with an experience. And it's a more attainable art form – a lot of people can own it because it's not an oil or acrylic, something like that."

At the heart of all these pictures is music, and the show's artists all channel an obvious love of music into each and every piece they create. For Neltner, making show posters is an extension of the musical process and a way to collaborate with his favorite bands.

"I always wanted to be a musician, but I've never had that given skill or talent," he says. "Music can be interpreted so many different ways, and this gives us, the artists, the opportunity to interpret

JUST THE FACTS

WHAT: *Pop Rocked 2: A Gig Poster Explosion*. Gallery show of rock posters featuring Neltner Creative, Small Print Press and Powerhouse Factories (Covington); FNHarsh Design and Jason Goad (Dayton); Will Ruocco and GalaxyReno (Columbus); Cricket Press (Lexington); and Boss Construction (Nashville)

WHEN: Dec. 8-Jan. 5. Opening reception 8 p.m. to midnight Dec. 8. Gallery hours are noon to 5 p.m. Tuesday-Wednesday, noon to 8 p.m. Thursday and noon to 5 p.m. Friday

WHERE: Powerhouse Factories' Jim Amann Gallery, 30 W. Pike St., Covington

PRICE: Free and open to the public

PARKING: On street

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it the way we see it. It kind of brings it to life – whether it's a dry sense of humor or some kind of twist in the music, it hopefully comes through in the music."

Many of Neltner's pieces at *Pop Rocked 2* are posters for Hank Williams III, a performer whose songs Neltner appreciated long before the two developed a working relationship.

"I went to a show seven, eight years ago and became interested in his music," Neltner says. "Being able to create a working relationship with someone like that, it sort of adds an extra level. Everyone needs the work to survive, but it's great if you can do it with something you love. With most of the bands that we work with, it starts with an appreciation of their music and kind of goes from there.

"It's a lot easier to create something you feel good about if you feel good about the music."